

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Kindly replace the first paragraph in the specification with the following amended paragraph:

This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Application No.09/955,729, now abandoned, filed September 19, 2001, which is a divisional application of U.S. Application No. 09/679,959, now U.S. Patent No. 6,319,997, filed October 5, 2000, which is a divisional application of U.S. Application No. 09/313,818, now U.S. Patent No. 6,204,344, filed May 18, 1999, which is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Application Nos. 09/080,412, now abandoned, and 09/081,392, now U.S. Patent No. 6,281,300, both filed May 18, 1998, which both claim the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/078,859, now abandoned, filed March 20, 1998. Each application in this chain of priority is incorporated by reference herein in its entirety.

Kindly replace the Abstract with the following amended Abstract:

A process/apparatus is disclosed for continuously separating a liquid medium comprising diluent and unreacted monomers from a polymerization effluent ~~comprising diluent, unreacted monomers and polymer solids, comprising a continuous discharge of the polymerization effluent from~~ of a slurry loop reactor containing a flow of slurry therein, comprising a discharge conduit extending a distance into the loop reactor; the conduit having a longitudinal axis and an opening inside the loop reactor; at least a portion of the conduit being curved along its longitudinal axis inside the loop reactor; and the opening substantially facing the flow of the slurry, wherein the discharge conduit is located within a lower leg of the loop reactor such that a continuous discharge of the polymerization effluent from a slurry reactor through a discharge valve and transfer conduit into a first intermediate pressure flash tank with a conical bottom defined by substantially straight sides inclined at an angle to that of horizontal equal to or greater than the angle of slide of the slurry/polymer solids and an exit seal chamber of such diameter (d) and length (l) as to maintain a desired volume of concentrated polymer solids/slurry in the exit seal chamber such as to form a pressure seal while continuously discharging a plug flow of concentrated polymer solids/slurry bottom

~~product of the first flash tank from the exit seal chamber through a seal chamber exit reducer with inclined sides defined by substantially straight sides inclined at an angle to that of horizontal equal to or greater than the angle of slide of~~ wherein volatile inert diluent and unreacted monomers are removed and the polymer solids which remain after removal of about 50 to 100% of the inert diluent therefrom to a second flash tank at a lower pressure.